

From Charolais Roots to Club Calf Champions

Heather Coughlin

The fall of 2026 will mark the fourth annual edition of The Pursuit Sale at Kay-R Charolais. It's the result of a club calf program started by Kord Phillips, the youngest of five-generations on the farm near Waskatenau, AB.

The program grew from Kord's 4-H years when he decided to breed his own steers with the support of his mom and dad, Arlana and Kasey, and his grandpa, Clinton Phillips. The very first cow he AI'd to a clubby bull was a cow picked from his dad's purebred Charolais herd. He then bought a Charolais bred heifer and started breeding her clubby.

From there, he partnered with his Grandpa – picking out bred heifers from his commercial herd to breed clubby. He still has some of those cows. One

went on to become one of his best producing cows. He has flushed her and recently sold half interest to an outfit in South Dakota.

The first year of the sale, Kord had about 10 head to sell. He has added about five head each year since, including some heifers. This year will be his largest offering yet, with upwards of 20 head, including steers and both clubby and purebred heifer calves.

The calves are sold through a timed online auction on the American site Steer Bidder.

Kord feels the site has a strong following and gives his calves maximum exposure to the right audience, American and Canadian alike. His calves are sold in Canadian dollars.

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high-quality club calves, with his cattle selling across North America. Some of his top-selling steers have gone to Oklahoma, Texas, and British Columbia, while others stayed in Alberta to compete at Calgary Stampede, Farm Fair and Agribition.

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A steer that sold in the first sale went undefeated at five jackpot shows in Oklahoma. At the Oklahoma Youth Expo (OYE), one of the largest youth shows in the region, he was named champion heavyweight in a class of more than 200 crossbred steers.

The top selling steer at last year's sale brought \$50,000 and went to Texas. Another steer from last year was third at the Calgary Stampede show and a top three winner at 14 shows total.

A heifer sold in last year's sale won Calgary this year and three of four jackpot shows.

In his words, Kord finds it "very rewarding to see

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stuff like that happen for good people" that he sells to.

By August this summer, he was already receiving texts from people wanting to see his calves ahead of the September 25th sale day.

Kord credits that to a number of factors. One is using the American clubby bulls that he has found to be most consistent, along with certain cow families that have proven to perform well. He sees many similarities to the purebred business in that you need to start with the same basics: quality, structure, and eye appeal.

Another key part of the program is that every animal is sold "ready to go" to the show ring. Kord takes the time to feed, halter break and clip each calf.





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Some buyers take delivery right after the sale and head straight into the fall show season, depending on where they are located.

Service is key also a major part of the program. Kord's relationship with a buyer does not end when the calf leaves the farm. He attends as many of the shows and jackpots as he can and helps to clip and fit the animals he has sold.

"I try to always be just a phone call or text away, and try to help as much as I can. If there's anything I can do to help make the project keep looking good or doing better, the more chance the person or family will be back."

At the Calgary Stampede this summer, eight steers and one heifer from Kord's program were in the show. He helped clip and fit all of them.

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gene in the cattle so they can always be bred back Charolais.

One cross he finds especially successful is a clubby bull on a clubby x Charolais cow or a purebred Charolais.

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He has also noticed that the Charolais colours – gold and silver – seem to be gaining popularity every year.

Next spring, Kord will calve out about 45 clubby-bred cows and/or recipis, but he's not done building the program. His next venture will be offering semen from some of his own club calf-influenced bulls, which are half Maine and half Angus, with a focus on maternal calving ease. He is also planning another first: a frozen genetics sale featuring both semen and embryos.

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